

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, 11-17, 19-22, and 24-25 remain pending in the application. Claim 2 has been previously cancelled. Claims 8, 10, 18, and 23 are cancelled by the present amendment. New dependent claims 26-32 have been added.

The rejection of claims 8, 10, 18, and 23 under 35 U.S.C. 112 is moot as these claims have been cancelled.

Claims 1, 5, and 9-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cook (US 5401001). Claims 10-12 and 18 are, in the alternative, rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook alone. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the primary sealing surface of the valve spindle is in direct abutting engagement with the primary bearing surface of the bearing sleeve. Cook does not disclose such a configuration as there is no direct contact between shaft 24 and bearing 28 at a sealing interface. Thus, claims 1, 5, and 9-18 are not anticipated by Cook.

Claims 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Cook in view of Fodor et al. (US 5496142). For the reasons set forth above, Cook does not disclose or teach the claimed invention. Fodor does not make up for the deficiencies of Cook.

Claims 19-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Cook in view of Ong et al. (US 5645900). For the reasons set forth above, Cook does not disclose or teach the claimed invention. Ong does not make up for the deficiencies of Cook.

Claims 1, 5, and 9-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Thauer (US 3693935) in view of Cook. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the housing includes a cylindrical portion defining a bore, and that the bearing sleeve comprises a cylindrical body that is mounted within the bore and is completely surrounded by the housing. Thauer does not disclose this configuration and further teaches away from such a configuration by requiring an external flange portion 4 that is necessary for radially locating the bearing within the bore. Thus, claims 1, 5 and 9-18 are allowable over the recited combination.

Claims 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Thauer in view of Cook and further in view of Fodor. For the reasons set forth above, Thauer does not disclose or teach the claimed invention. Cook and Fodor do not make up for the deficiencies of Thauer.

Claims 19-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Thauer in view of Cook and further in view of Ong. For the reasons set forth above, Thauer does not disclose or teach the claimed invention. Cook and Ong do not make up for the deficiencies of Thauer.

Claims 24-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Thauer in view of Cook and further in view of Bartz. For the reasons set forth above, Thauer does not disclose or teach the claimed invention. Cook and Bartz do not make up for the deficiencies of Thauer.

Finally, new claims 26-32 are also allowable for the reasons set forth above. Applicant asserts that all claims are now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests an indication of such.

Fees in the amount of \$156.00 for three additional dependent claims may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1482 in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds. Applicant believes that no additional fees are due, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the same deposit account for any additional fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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